

Phonological System of Bhaderwahi

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Abstract

The present paper takes up the phonological description of Bhaderwahi with focus on the segmental part of the phonological system including consonants, vowels, diphthongs, syllables including their distribution and arrangement in the language.

Keywords: Bhaderwahi, Vowels and Consonants, Syllable, and Consonant Cluster.

1. Introduction

Bhaderwahi is a primitive tribal community settled predominantly in the hilly regions of Jammu & Kashmir. It derives its name from the beautiful mountain valley of Bhadarwah, also known as “Nagonkibhoomi” (land of Snakes). Bhaderwahi also known by the names of Bhaderi, Bhadrohi, Bhidli, etc., is spoken by around 50,000 people in Bhadarwah town and surrounding villages of Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir state. Grierson (1919) has placed Bhaderwahi language into Indo Aryan group of languages. Bhaderwahi language has three dialects: Bhaderwahi, Bhalesvi and Padri. After the early sketches published in Bailey's *Languages of the Northern Himalayas* (1908) and Grierson (1919) it has received very little attention from linguists. It doesn't have any script of its own and uses Arabic or Devnagri script. In this backdrop the present paper aims to provide a description of Bhaderwahi Phonology, wherein a detailed account of Bhaderwahi sounds would be given.

2. Methodology

For the present paper intensive fieldwork was carried out to collect the data from various areas of Bhaderwah. A questionnaire was developed consisting of words focusing on the phonological system of Bhaderwahi. The data was elicited by direct questioning of the informant using sophisticated voice recorder. The data was then transcribed and analyzed using the phonological methodology for language analysis.

3. Analysis

As already mentioned, the present paper focuses on the aspects of segmental phonology of Bhaderwahi.

3.1 Segmentals

The segmental inventory of Bhaderwahi is observed to include 35 Consonants and 13 vowel sounds which are discussed below.

3.1(a) Consonants

Based on the analysis of the distribution of consonantal segments, the following table represents the consonant sounds of Bhaderwahi on the basis of their place of articulation, manner of articulation and states of glottis.

Manner of Articulation	Place of Articulation

		Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	velar	Glottal Stops
Stops	vl.unasp	p			t	ʈ		k	
	vl.asp	p ^h			t ^h	ʈ ^h		k ^h	
	vd.unsap	b			d	ɖ		g	
	vd.asp	b ^h			d ^h	ɖ ^h		g ^h	
Affricates	vl.unas						tʃ		
	vl.asp						tʃ ^h		
	vd.unas						dʒ	dʒ ^h	
	vd.asp								
Nasal		m			n		ŋ		
Trill					r	ɽ			
Lateral					l				
Fricative	Vl		f	ʈs	s		ʃ		h
	Vd			ʈs ^h	z				
Semivowel			v				j		

Table 1: Consonant System of Bhaderwahi

The following table shows the distribution of consonants at initial, medial, and final positions of words, wherever possible.

CONSONANT	INITIAL	MEDIAL	FINAL

/p/	po:tʃi: 'granddaughter'	kʰopər 'hip'	bʰā:p 'steam'
/pʰ/	pʰe:ʃu 'picture'	.....	.....
/b/	bũzal 'earth quake'	ambar 'sky'	təla:b 'pond'
/bʰ/	bʰat 'road'	.....	sibʰ 'all'
/t/	təla:b 'pond'	mitti: 'clay'	parvat 'mountain'
/tʰ/	tʰuk 'saliva'	ha:tʰi: 'elephant'	nath 'nose ring',
/ʈ/	ʈabar 'family'	ʃaʃa:n 'rock'	kʰaʈ 'cot'
/ʈʰ/	ʈʰāɖ 'cold'	maʈʰu: 'boy'	guʈʰ 'cave'
/k/	kudrat 'nature'	ʃikaʈ 'mud'	ʃʰik 'sneeze'
/kʰ/	kʰo:tho: 'donkey'	kʰe:kʰʈu: 'cheek'	ʃikʰ 'mother in law'
/d/	dunja: 'world'	ā:do: 'darkness'	ʃā:nd 'moon'
/dʰ/	dʰund 'fog'	ā:dʰi: 'storm'	dudʰ 'milk'
/ɖ/	ɖal 'marriage'	raɖo: 'widower'	ʈʰāɖ 'cold'
/ɖʰ/	ɖʰala:n 'slope'	.....	.....
/g/	guʈʰ 'cave'	aŋga:ro: 'ember'	ag 'fire'

/g ^h /	g ^h o:ɾ 'stone'	kaŋg ^h o: 'comb'	.....
/ʃ/	ʃikaɾ 'mud'	baʃʃo: 'baby'	ʃõ:ʃ 'beak'
/ʃ ^h /	ʃ ^h a:vɾi: 'shade'	ma:ʃ ^h i: 'honey'	magarmaʃ ^h 'crocodile'
/ts/	tsāvar 'yak'	bitsu: 'scorpio'	.....
/ts ^h /	ts ^h a:nu 'strainer'	.....	.....
/s/	su:radʒ 'sun'	ma:si: 'mother's sister'	sa:ra:s 'crane'
/ʃ/	ʃe:ro: 'father in law'	ve:ʃi:ja: 'prostitute'	o:ʃ 'dew'
/h/	hava: 'air'	ze:hr 'venom'	greh 'planet'
/m/	mā:zan 'ash'	dʒamun 'ground'	t ^h o:m 'garlic'
/n/	na:lo: 'brook'	pa:ni: 'water'	ban 'forest'
/ŋ/	.....	aŋga:ro: 'ember'	ʃiŋ 'horn'
/l/	la:ɾi: 'bride'	na:lo: 'brook'	būzal 'earthquake'
/r/	re:ta:ɾo: 'desert'	aŋga:ro: 'ember'	ha:r 'flood'
/ɾ/	.....	ʃ ^h a:vɾi: 'shade'	paha:ɾ 'hill'
/dʒ/	dʒamun 'ground'	bidʒli: 'lightning'	gū:dʒ 'echo'
/dʒ ^h /	dʒ ^h i:l 'lake'	murdʒ ^h a:nu: 'to wither'	.....

/v/	vadʒi 'thunder'	parvat 'mountain'	ka:v'crow'
/j/	ja:d'memory'	kja:ɽu:'wood'	ko: dʒaj 'who'
/f/	fe:fɽo: 'lung'	tu:fa:n'wind'	sõ:f'aniseed'
/z/	zama:ji: 'son-in-law'	mã:zan 'ash'	ba:z 'hawk'

Table 2: Initial, Medial and Final positions of Consonants of Bhaderwahi

3.1(b) Vowels

On the basis of the analysis of the data, Bhaderwahi has 13 vowels which are arranged in the table below.

	Front	Mid	Back
High	/i/, /i:/	/i/	/u/, /u:/
Mid	/e/, /e:/	/ə/	/o/, /o:/
Mid Low	/ɛ/,		
Low		/a/, /a:/	

Table 3: Vowel System of Bhaderwahi

The following table shows the distribution of Vowels of Bhaderwahi at initial, medial and final positions of words wherever possible.

Vowel	Word Initially	Word Medially	Word Finally
/i/	ill 'vulture'	mitti: 'clay'	.....
/i:/	.....	ta:ri:k ^h 'date'	mitti: 'clay'
/e/	e'it'	dʒedʒ / 'sunrise'	.....
/e:/	e:nak 'spectacles'	re:t 'sand'	dʒē: 'husband's sister'
/ə/	əŋgu:ʈhi: 'ring'	təla:b 'pond'	.....
/ɛ/	.....	mənu 'man'	b ^h ē 'buffalo'
/a/	ambar 'sky'	ʈ ^h āḍ 'cold'	is ma 'in'
/a:/	ā:do: 'storm/'	re:ta:ɽo: 'desert'	inna: 'this'
/u/	uḍʒlo: 'vision'	būzal 'earth quake'	ʈʃa:ʈʃu 'father's brother'
/u:/	ū:ʈ ^h 'camel'	gū:ḍʒ 'echo'	hījū: 'ice'
/o/	noʃ [~] 'daughter in law'	bəʈʃ ^h ɽo 'calf'
/o:/	o:ʃ 'dew'	mo:ʈʃi: 'cobbler'	ā:do: 'storm'
/i/	kilərk	vadʒi 'thunder'

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:2 February 2018

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Table 4: Initial, Medial and Final positions of Vowels of Bhaderwahi

3.2 Diphthongs

A diphthong also known as a gliding vowel is a phonetic sequence, consisting of a vowel and a glide that is interpreted as a single vowel. It refers to two adjacent vowel sounds occurring within the same syllable. Technically the tongue moves from one point of articulation to other during the pronunciation of the vowel. As per the data three diphthongs are observed in this language. These diphthongs are given below.

Diphthong	Example
ei:	lei: a:no: 'to appear'
ua:	sua:d 'taste'
ai	bəlai 'cat'

3.3 Consonant Clusters

A consonant cluster is a combination of two or more consonants which are pronounced together. A language can have double or triple consonant clusters or both. In Bhaderwahi, only double consonant clusters are present which usually occur at word initial, or final positions.

br	brat	'fast'
pr	pre:m	'affection'
tr	trakʃi:	'balance'
zj	zja:da:	'many'
nj	njo:l	'mongoose'
ɖr	ɖrano:	'to frighten'
kr	kro:d ^h	'anger'
ʃt	duʃt	'naughty'
rb	zarb	'multiplication'
nʃ	munʃ	'husband'
hr	ze:hr	'poison'

3.4 Syllable Structure

A syllable is a unit of sound composed of a central peak of sonority (usually a vowel), and the consonants that cluster around this central peak. Syllables are often considered the phonological "building blocks" of words. They can influence the rhythm of a language, its prosody, its poetic meter and its stress patterns. Syllabification is the separation of a word into syllables, whether spoken or written. In Bhaderwahi, syllabification has been done as

- i. Monosyllabic
- ii. Disyllabic, and
- iii. Polysyllabic words

I. MONOSYLLABIC PATTERN

- | | | |
|---------|------|--------|
| 1. V | o: | ‘that’ |
| 2. VC | ãv | ‘I’ |
| 3. CV | ro: | ‘of’ |
| 4. CVC | iṭi: | ‘here’ |
| 5. CCVC | brat | ‘fast’ |

II. DISYLLABIC PATTERN

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. VCV | a:---lo: | ‘nest’ |
| 2. CV-CV | gẽ---ḍo: | ‘rhinoceros’ |
| 3. VC-CV | im---li: | ‘tamarind’ |
| 4. VC-CVC | an---paṭ | ‘illiterate’ |
| 5. CVC-CV | gan---ḍo: | ‘onion’ |
| 6. CV-CVC | pi:---pal | ‘pipal’ |
| 7. CVC-CVC | duf---man | ‘enemy’ |

III. POLYSYLLABIC PATTERN

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------|
| 1. CV-CV-CV | ma---sa:---lo | ‘spice’ |
|-------------|---------------|---------|

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:2 February 2018

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2. CVC-CV-CV to:v--li--jo: 'towel'
3. VC-CV-CVC im--ti--ha:n 'examination'
4. CVC-CVC-CV ʃiʃ--kən-ni: 'bolt'
5. V-CVC-CVC a:--taŋg--va:d 'terrorism'
6. CVC-CVC-CVC saŋg-mar-mar 'marble'
7. CVC-CV-CV-CV raɖ--- ku---ma---ri: 'princess'

4. Conclusion

The present paper presented the phonological description of Bhaderwahi with focus on segmental part of the phonological system including consonants, vowels and diphthongs. It is observed that the consonantal system is rich consisting of 35 consonants while as 13 vowels are also present. Bhaderwahi possess double consonant clusters at the word initial and final positions. Medial consonant clusters are absent in the Bhaderwahi language.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 **18:2 February 2018**

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